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# The Church in a Southern Mill Town



**THE CHURCH OF THE MESSIAH**  
**MAYODAN, NORTH CAROLINA**  
**ALFRED R. BERKELEY,**  
MINISTER IN CHARGE

## FOREWORD

This little book is intended to serve a two-fold purpose.

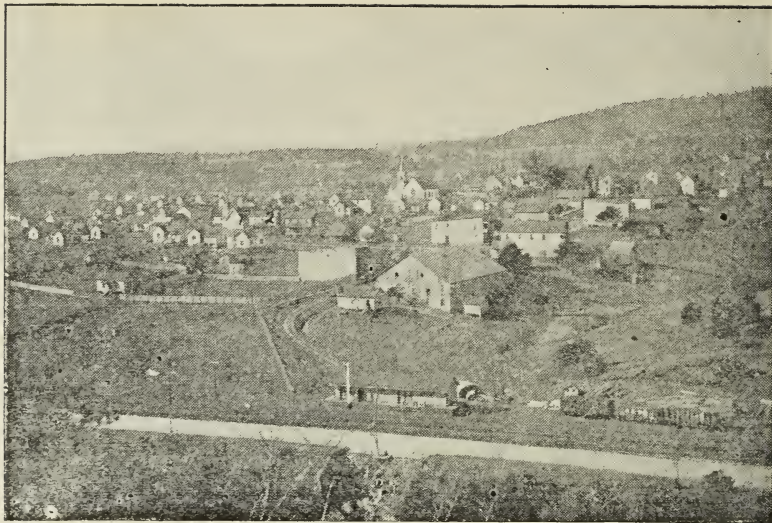
It is an account of our stewardship to the many friends whose interest and help have made possible the Church's work at Meyodan.

To many others, to whom the word Mayodan has no meaning, it comes as a message of introduction, sent in the hope that it may enlist their interest and co-operation in a greater undertaking for Christ and His Kingdom.

The first part of this account appeared in the children's number of the Spirit of Missions for 1909.



THE CHURCH OF THE MESSIAH AROUND WHICH CENTRES THE WEL-  
FARE WORK IN MAYODAN



BIRDSEYE VIEW OF MAYODAN

**M**AYODAN is a mill town in the northwest corner of the Diocese of North Carolina. Twelve years ago a large cotton factory was built on the banks of the Mayo River near its junction with the Dan. The operatives and their families, to the number of twelve hundred, have come chiefly from the surrounding highlands. They are largely the same kind of people that the Church is trying to reach in the mountains of this and adjoining states.

Of pure Anglo-Saxon extraction they have in a measure been cut off from the outside world for generations. Possessing little or no property and with limited school facilities they have grown up in poverty and ignorance. In the country they are renters or tenants, and having to pay from one-third to one-half of their crops for rent of land and tools they are able to maintain but a bare existence. In this section tobacco is the chief crop and whole families, including women and small children, can be seen working in the fields. On the whole they are a fine class of people—honest, hospitable and intelligent. From them have sprung some of America's substantial men. All they need is a chance.

These people are now pouring into the southern mill towns seeking steady employment and better remuneration. Here they have the pleasures of social life, the advantages of school and church, and better their condition in many ways. Already there are nearly 150,000 factory people in North Carolina alone, and this number is destined to be increased many fold in the near future. These conditions not only produce important social and economic





SOME OF OUR CHILDREN



questions; they offer a wonderful opportunity for the Church to spread its message among a people whose need is great and to whom it is almost unknown.

The question has been asked, "Can the Episcopal Church reach and hold and uplift these factory people?" Here at Mayodan we are trying to answer it by a practical experiment. An attractive church, well located, was built soon after the town was started. Services were held by a visiting clergyman once or twice each month and a Sunday-school was conducted from time to time by the two or three communicants in the village. After eight years of occasional services, during which time there was scarcely an addition to the Church, those in authority realized that to make any real progress there must be a resident minister who could identify himself with the people by going into their homes and knowing them in their everyday life.

Accordingly, about five years ago, a young clergyman was sent to live in Mayodan. He was the first and at that time the only resident pastor in the village although several denominations had erected church buildings in which occasional services were held.

He soon saw that to obtain the best results it was necessary to secure a sufficient number of helpers and an adequate equipment for some sort of institutional work. There were few, if any, to teach in the Sunday-school, play the organ or assist in the work, and as the clergyman had five other mission stations under his charge he had to be away from Mayodan much of

the time. An appropriation from the Board of Missions enabled Bishop Cheshire to place a woman worker in the field and Miss Emma Karrer of Raleigh has been rendering efficient and self sacrificing service since September, 1906.

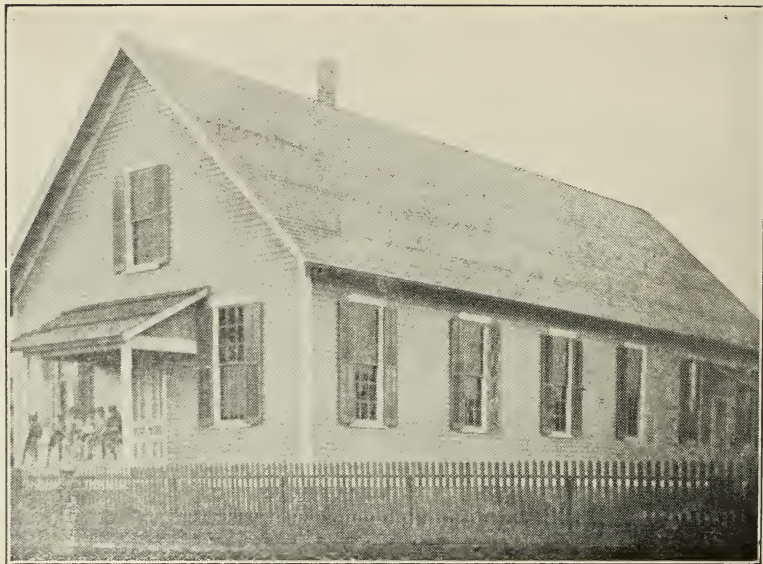
Shortly afterward Mr. C. P. Willcox of Charlotte, was added to the staff. He has proven a most faithful and competent assistant, not only in the work at Meyodan, but in the associated missions. Mr. Willcox was ordained to the Diaconate last October, and will continue at Meyodan, receiving a salary just half of what he could obtain elsewhere.

Meanwhile a small two-room cottage near the church was secured for a parish house. One room was fitted up for a lecture room to seat about forty persons. Here the minister gathered the children of the neighborhood in the evenings. Another night there would be a magic lantern exhibition or some other form of entertainment. The second room of the house was converted into a reading and game room in which were placed magazines, picture books, and various indoor games. The young people flocked to this place and good effects were seen almost immediately. Many boys and girls were kept off the streets by having a comfortable place in which to spend their evenings in recreation and social enjoyment after having worked in the factory all day.

We soon out grew our first quarters and with the help of friends were able to buy a good two-story house with five rooms on a large lot adjoining the church property. This furnished quarters for the minister and his assistant, a meeting place for the clubs and societies and also for the night



PARISH HOUSE



SUNDAY SCHOOL BUILDING AND AUDITORIUM

school. One room is used for a public library and reading room. It contains about five hundred miscellaneous books, donated chiefly by the Church Periodical Club, and largely used by the young people of the town.

The efficiency of the work has been further enhanced by the erection of a large auditorium in the rear of the church and Parish-House. Besides affording a place of meeting for the Sunday-school this building is used for entertainments and other public gatherings not distinctively religious. Before it was built there was no such place in town and the church buildings were frequently used for such purposes.

The Sunday-school is our pride and joy. It has grown steadily and during the past year has had an enrollment of over two hundred, about one-fifth of the total population of the town. The Sunday-school affords the only religious instruction that many receive. We have been amazed to find how little many of them know upon entering the school of the fundamentals of Christianity. Private prayer is seldom practiced and the Sacraments are little used. To many infant baptism is foolishness and "sprinkling" of little effect.

Recently a girl of twelve or fourteen years said that she had not heard of Christ until she came to Mayodan.

Few had ever known anything of the Episcopal Church and at first could not comprehend its services. Now we have well attended and heartily rendered services. They love to sing and we have thirty children in our vested choir.

Besides branches of the Woman's Auxiliary and the Junior Auxiliary we



THE SUNDAY SCHOOL FOUR YEARS AGO.





“ THE CRUSADERS ”  
Young Men's Bible Class.

have two clubs for girls in which sewing and cooking are taught, and a Castle of Knights of King Arthur for the boys. Each week there is a cottage prayer meeting, also a social meeting and Bible class for the women. For several months every winter we conduct a night school for those who work in the mill and cannot attend the public school. There have been as many as fifty pupils in three classes, some of them young men learning to read and write.

It has been our purpose to help those to whom we minister mentally and physically as well as morally and spiritually. By so doing we have gained their interest and confidence. Our work began with the children and continues largely among them, though we have been able to reach many of the parents.

The fact that all the children over twelve years of age work in the mill gives an added interest to the work.

By working with them seven days in the week we have been able to teach them the meaning of the Church and train them in its ways.

In the Diocesan Journal of 1904 the Church of the Messiah, Mayodan, is accredited with seven families, nineteen baptized persons and eleven communicants. On May 1st, 1909, it reported eighty-five families or parts of families, one hundred and thirty-one baptised persons and eighty-five communicants, nine Sunday-school teachers and two hundred and fifty scholars.

Forty-one persons had been baptised and forty-one confirmed in the year. Bishop Cheshire, in his address to the convention, noted that this was the larg-



THE CHOIR

est number of persons he had confirmed in any one church during the year and that it was almost one-tenth of the total confirmations in the diocese.

The total contributions of the congregation for the year were \$719.18 of which \$154.33 went for purposes outside of the mission.

We cite these figures in no spirit of self-emulation, but merely to show the progress and growth of the work. We realize that whatever of success has attended our efforts is due not only to the loyal support that we have received from our co-workers at Mayodan, but also to the interest and material assistance of our friends throughout the country.

To bring about the results outlined above has required a considerable outlay of money. The congregation at Mayodan has done its part nobly. It pays its proportion of the Minister's salary and the current expenses of the Church of the Messiah. To secure our equipment and the means to carry on the institutional work we have had to seek outside aid. The parish house and Sunday-school building with other improvements have cost approximately \$2,700.00. For the first two years we were responsible for all of Mr. Willcox's salary. Now the convocation relieves us of a part of this. Often we have not known where the money for the next month, and indeed for the past month, was coming from, but so far it has always come, though not always without considerable anxiety and solicitation.

To continue the work upon present lines it is necessary that we secure at least \$300.00 per year, the greater part for the salary of the assistant. If any persons into whose hands this pamphlet falls are willing to help with this



SEWING AND COOKING SCHOOL AT RECESS



KNOWLHURST CHAPEL, STOKES COUNTY, N. C.  
One of the five outlying missions ~~sewed~~ by Meyodan Clergy

*Revised*



part of the work let them send contribution to the undersigned. One little boy who heard of our needs sent us his first earnings—twenty-five cents.

Our remaining need is a rectory. With it we would have as complete a church plant and equipment as is necessary. Nothing would so much insure the permanency of the work. The lack of a home often prevents the Bishop being able to secure suitable men for mission stations. Therefore we have set out to obtain a rectory and are going to follow the same plan by which we were able to buy our parish house.

We ask that	
1 person or Society give -----	\$100.00
2 persons or Societies give each \$50.00 -----	100.00
6 persons or Societies give each \$25.00 -----	150.00
10 persons or Societies give each \$10.00 -----	100.00
50 persons or Societies give each \$5.00 -----	250.00
100 persons or Societies give each \$2.00 -----	200.00
100 persons or Societies give each \$1.00 -----	100.00
<hr/>	
269 persons or Societies give a total of -----	\$1,000.00

This amount with what we can raise locally will secure a simple, comfortable house. Will you not become one of these 269 persons by sending us any sum that you may feel disposed?

In order to bring this matter before others we would ask that you speak of it to any friend or organization that you think might be interested.

We shall be glad to furnish additional copies of this pamphlet and further information to any one desirous of the same.

In conclusion we take this opportunity to again express our thanks to our friends in all parts of the country who have helped us in so many different ways. Some have sent clothing for the needy, boxes for our Christmas trees, books and magazines for the library and reading room, games and toys for the children. Others have sent furnishings for the church and choir. The Auxiliaries of our own diocese have given us generous and continued support.

We have tried to use each gift where it would help most. We wish that every friend could pay us a visit and see just what we are attempting.

Faithfully yours,

ALFRED R. BERKELEY.

Mayodan, N. C., January, 1910.

*Endorsement*  
THE BISHOP'S ~~ANNOUNCEMENT~~

The work done in this mission is of the very greatest importance, and deserves the most liberal support.

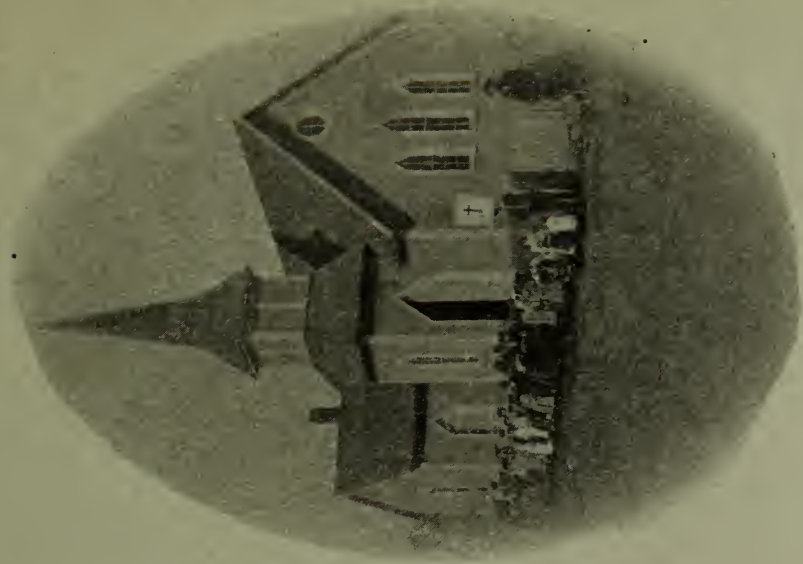
It has demonstrated the possibility of most successful work among the operatives of our great factories. I believe the Church has no where better results to show in her missionary endeavors. I trust that the faithful Priest-in-charge, may receive such help as he needs for the securing of a rectory, and thus helping to insure the permanence of the work.

JOSEPH BLOUNT CHESHIRE,

Bishop of North Carolina.

December 10th, 1909.





CHURCH OF THE MESSIAH  
Mayodan, N. C.  
Sunday School in Procession

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PRESS

Greensboro  
N. C.









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